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SPECIAL 109th AGM Issue

Committees & Projects Report

Below is a summary of the reports presented at the 2019 AGM:

COMMITTEES/SPECIALIST GROUPS

Insect Committee

Contact: *insects.eanhs@gmail.com*

Highlights

- Commenced collection of insect samples for sequencing under the Global Malaise Trap Program of the Centre for Biodiversity Genomics
- Commenced butterfly project at City Park's Pollinator Garden
- Involved in joint project with University of Texas on "Ecology of Invasive Species"
- Our Friends the Pollinators: A Handbook of Pollinator Diversity: 7,558 downloads & 839 views from discoverpollinators.org & academia.edu
- Trained 7 members and students on insect specimen handling

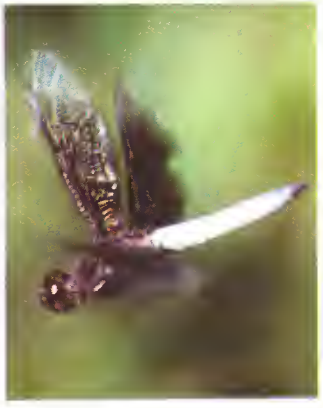


PHOTO DINO MARTINS

Bird Committee

Activities include ornithological advice, publications, taxonomy, bird ringing, records and databases and supporting Nature Kenya's bird walks.

Contact: *birds@naturekenya.org*

Highlights

- Revision and update of the Checklist of the Birds of Kenya ongoing.
- Museum-KWS-Nature Kenya waterbird counts carried out in July and January with Bird Committee support. Counts now include Lake Baringo
- Ringing of Palearctic migrants at Ngulia, Tsavo West, in Nov-Dec; Nairobi Ringing Group continue ringing on a regular basis.

PHOTO JAMES KASHANGAKI

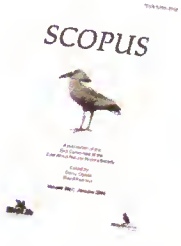
Kenya endemic Hinde's Babblers now breeding in Nairobi.

Scopus

Journal of East African Ornithology
Peer-reviewed ornithological journal

- Downloaded in 53 countries
- In January 2019 article downloads surpassed 1,000 for the month

Contact: *scopus@naturekenya.org*



Kenya Bird Map

Using citizen science to record and understand the distribution of Kenya's birds.

Contact: *kenyabirdmap@naturekenya.org*

Highlights

- A total of 52,028 bird records submitted in 2018 (8% more than 2017); 1,117 bird lists submitted in 2018 (9% more than 2017).
- There were 398 atlas squares (these are pentads, 5 minutes by 5 minutes) covered in 2018, and 1000 atlas squares covered countrywide since the project began.
- Over 70 atlassers trained through 6 workshops (Nakuru, Nyahururu, Masai Mara, Kilifi, Mombasa, Kwale) and the Fundamentals of Ornithology course.
- Bird mapping expeditions conducted in the Masai Mara, Trans Mara, Lake Victoria Basin and Loita Hills.

PHOTO SIDNEY SHEMA

Diederik Cuckoo

Succulenta East Africa

Specializing in succulent plants.

Contact: *Andrena - low-jalows5@gmail.com; Bob Entwhistle - robertentwistle@gmail.com*

Milestones 2018/2019:

- A new Kenya species *Delosperma melepoense* named in 2018, found by Susie Allan during a Succulenta field trip.

PHOTO SUSIE ALLAN

Delosperma Melepoense

Environmental Policy and Legislation Working Group (ELPWiG)

Advocacy group that contributes to environmental policies & legislation.

Contact: *policyadvocacy@naturekenya.org*

Milestones 2018/2019:

- Provided comments on 11 national government agencies draft legislation, key among them Draft Lake Naivasha Catchment area Protection order 2018, Management Guidelines and Conservation plan, which attempted to lower the riparian contour line.
- Submitted memoranda to 8 Senate and National Assembly bills, including the Energy bill 2017.
- Comments submitted on County level legislation - Kilifi County Forest Policy and Kakamega County Environmental Management Bill, 2017.
- Submitted Environment Impact Assessment comments for 12 proposed developments located near sensitive conservation areas, which include the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment on the proposed Nairobi-Mombasa Expressway project.

COMMITTEES/SPECIALIST GROUPS REPORT 2018 - 2019

Kenya Herpetofauna Working Group

Activities include identification, training, and conservation of amphibian and reptile habitats.

Contact: *khwginfo@gmoil.com*
Cell: 0711-706450

Milestones 2018/2019:

- Survey at Irangi Forest to search for Irangi Puddle Frog
- Conducted community awareness at Kitobo Forest in Taita-Taveta County
- Survey at Kijabe Forest to search for Mt. Kenya Bush Viper
- Talk on myths and facts about snakes and snake bite treatment by Dr. Patrick Malonza
- Planning an annual biology course on reptiles and amphibians.

PHOTO WASHINGTON WACHIRA

Common Reed frog

Youth Committee

An action group of Nature Kenya initiated by the Society's youth members.

Activities: Outreach programs, collaboration with other committees, trips and networking.

Contact: *youthcommittee@noturekenyo.org*

Milestones 2018/2019:

- Kinangop school outreach program
- Updating bird checklist at Rhino Venture Campsite in Nakuru
- Members participated in the annual ringing of migratory birds at Ngulia in Tsavo West, and in the January waterbird counts.

PHOTO MJOSE

Youth Committee members at Rhino venture campsite.

Plants Committee

Contact: *botany@museums.or.ke or judithwanza@yohoo.com*

Milestones 2018/2019:

- Diversity review at City Park; plant diversity increased by 10 species from 558 to 568
- Bryophytes (mosses, liverworts) (18 species) and lichens (15 species) were surveyed for the first time
- Species propagated and conserved *ex situ* at Nairobi Botanic Gardens, NMK. Propagation of threatened species ongoing
- Preparation of field guide for key species at City Park ongoing

Mammals Committee

Research in mammals' biology, ecology and conservation, Capacity building and mapping all mammals in Kenya.

Contact:
Mommolscommitte.info@gmoil.com
Cell: 0706-966617
Facebook:- Mommol Atlos in Kenyo (MAKE)

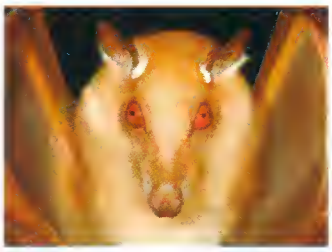


PHOTO SIMON MUSILA

Fruit Bat (*Epomophorus wahlbergi*)

Milestones 2018/2019:

- Developing Kenya's 1st Mammals Checklist ongoing
- Mapping the distribution of mammals in Kenya using Mammals Atlas for Kenya (MAKE) – looking for mapping volunteers.

Samaki Working Group of Kenya

Creates awareness of fishes of Kenya and promotes fish conservation and sustainable use.

Activities: Samaki days, fish excursions, interactive talks or lectures, participation in national environment days.

Contact: *info@kenweb.or.ke*

Milestones 2018/2019:

- Continued monthly excursions at Rueka Dam in Kiambu, Mbagathi River, Theta River, Athi River.
- Launched Hall of Fishes at Nairobi Museum Gallery with Ichthyology section NMK
- • Field expedition to Lorian swamp, Isiolo County, to develop checklist and assess the status of Buffalo Springs tilapia.

Habitat Restoration Initiative for East Africa (HARI)

Creating awareness and appreciation of fishes of Kenya and promoting fish conservation and sustainable use.

Contact:
williom.wombugu@yohoo.com

Milestones 2018/2019:

- Rehabilitation exercise to conserve Ondiri swamp in Kikuyu sub-county, together with Muguga Community Forest Association, staff from the County, and Kenya Forestry Research Institute. Over 200 indigenous saplings were planted.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HARI

For updates visit
www.naturekeny.org

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Friends of Nairobi Arboretum (FoNA)

Maintaining the Arboretum for Recreation, Education and Scientific Knowledge.

Contact: *educatian@nairabiarboretum.org*
Cell; 0727-300933

Milestanes 2018/2019:

- Arboretum Tree Survey has been completed; a report is being prepared
- The Arboretum Management Plan 2013-2018 has lapsed. The 2019-2023 Plan is being worked on.
- A diversified number of people visiting the Arboretum increased since the introduction of entrance fees in September 2016
- Environmental Education Programs, tree walks and lecture series at the tree centre.

Friends of City Park (FoCP)

Committed to protecting and restoring City Park.

Contact: *cityparkfriends@naturekenya.arg*
Cell: 0713-130005
Website: www.friendsafcitypark.arg

Milestanes 2018-2019:

- Convened Master-plan Workshop and developed a draft City Park Land Use Plan
- Coordinated update of 2010 City Park Plant Diversity Checklist
- Lobbied for rehabilitation of burst sewers leaking into Kibagare River at City Park. New sewer line 90% complete.
- Commenced rehabilitation of City Park Maze (Mtego wa Panya) with Nairobi City County Government (NCCG) & Kenya Horticultural Society (KHS)
- City Park Tree Management Plan completed (NCCG, NMK, Tree Experts)
- Engaged with NCCG and National Land Commission on land issues at City Park
- Beautification of reclaimed section at entrance of City Park (NCCG, Botanical experts).
- Finalized draft bill on City Park Management Board.

Nairobi Biodiversity Park

Currently focusing on inventory of plants and invertebrates in the seasonal wetlands on the hillside in the northern corner of Nairobi National Park.

Contact: *fleur@africaonline.ca.ke*

Milestanes 2018-2019:

- Three botanical and invertebrate surveys carried out by museum scientists during the long rains season of 2018.

PHOTO PETER USHER

Cyphia glandulifera.

Friends of Arabuko-Sokoke Forest

Activities including monitoring and reporting illegal tree felling & poaching of animals; creating awareness of the value of the forest; and supporting Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Wildlife Service and Arabuko-Sokoke Forest Adjacent Dwellers Association (ASFADA).

Contact: *infa@friendsarabukosakake.arg*
Website: https://www.friendsarabukasokoke.org

Milestones 2018/2019:

- Changed from a community-based organization to a company limited by guarantee
- Switched to SMART data collection
- Employed a field and administrative assistant
- Purchased four motorbikes, S2 fence posts, and procured a tractor for patrols in the forest
- Renovated the KWS education hall
- Produced a short film for educational purposes
- Over 200 paid up Friends of Arabuko-Sokoke Forest
- Designed, printed and erected five signs at the forest entrance.

PARTNERS

Tropical Biology Association (TBA)

Website: *www.trapical-bialagy.org*
Milestones 2018/2019:

- Ran 2 month-long field courses in Kenya & Borneo: 46 biologists from 27 countries trained
- Delivered 4 short courses for S6 conservation managers from 12 countries
- Facilitated 6 conservation managers working in the MADIO region to 2 learning exchanges
- Launched 'Citizen Science in Africa – making it work for conservation.

Journal of East African Natural History

Contact: *Bytebier@ukzn.ac.za ar affice@naturekkenya.arg*

Milestanesn2018/2019

- Vol. 107 Part 1 (2018) published in August; Part 2 (2018) published in December 2018
- Available online (only) via BioOne and African Journals Online (Open Access)
- Income from BioOne in 2018 estimated to be around $10,000
- Total income since we joined BioOne in 2007 = > $ 86,000

The EANHS/NMK Library

Contact: *akchege@museums.ar.ke*

Milestanes 2018/2019:

- Over 970 books and over 1,000 periodicals & Daily Newspapers were acquired during the year. Over 1,250 clients were served during the year.
- The Library, courtesy of Nature Kenya, acquired a new powerful computer which greatly increased the digitization capacity, and a strong WIFI Access point which enhanced internet access for our clients.

September Skies

BY FLEUR NG'WENO

As clear skies return in September, look up after sunset to see the moon, planets, bright stars and constellations (the pictures that we imagine the stars make).

Stars & Planets, Sept 2019

The planet Jupiter is the brilliant light overhead at sunset, moving west during the evening. It seems to escort the constellation of the Scorpion, with the star Antares as its fiery eye. To the east (left) of the Scorpion, eight bright stars form the teapot-shaped constellation Sagittarius, the Archer. The golden planet Saturn is close to the "handle" of the "teapot". The moon, waxing larger, is near Jupiter and Antares on Sept 5, closer to Jupiter on the 6th, and very close to Saturn on the 8th.

Early in September, the bright planet Venus appears in the glare of the sunset. Soon the tiny planet Mercury also appears. Mercury rises faster above the sunset, passing Venus at mid-month. Mercury approaches the bright star Spica towards end month. On September 29 the slender crescent moon is near Venus, Mercury and Spica.

Across the sky, high in the northeast, is the bright star Altair, flanked by two fainter stars. Between Altair and the northern horizon is the brilliant white star Vega. It's in a tiny constellation called the Lyre. Below Altair, east of Vega, is another bright star, Deneb.

On a clear, dark night, away from city lights, you may see the Milky Way stretching like a pale ribbon across the sky, past Deneb, Altair, Sagittarius and the Scorpion. It is our galaxy, made up of millions and millions of stars.

In the morning before dawn, the constellation of Orion the Hunter is high in the east, with the brightest star, Sirius, to the south, and the second brightest star, Canopus, further south.

Moon Sept '19

Sept 6: First quarter ('half' moon overhead at sunset), Sept 14: Full moon, Harvest Moon. Sept 22: Last quarter ('half' moon overhead at dawn). Sept 28: New moon; look for the thin crescent moon above the sunset, near Venus and Mercury, on the 29th.

September Sun

The equinox is on Sept 23 this year; the sun will be in the south until the next equinox in March. For us on the equator, the sun will also rise early and set early during the next 3 months.

SEPTEMBER AT A GLIMPSE

Sep 4th	Morning Bird Walk
Sep 7th	FoNA Tree Walk
Sep 11th	Morning Bird Walk
Sep 15th	Sunday Bird Watch
Sep 18th	Morning Bird Walk
Sep 21st	FoCP Nature Walk
Sep 25th	Morning Bird Walk/Public Lecture
Sep 30th	FoNA Tree Walk

Bird ringing every Tuesday morning (check with Ornithology section, National Museums).

Birders Please Note! The Wednesday Morning Birdwalks meet at 8:30 am at the Nairobi National Museum. Transport is on a self-help basis. The group meets in the courtyard of the Nairobi National Museum, past the entrance to the galleries. We normally return at about 12:30 pm.

The Sunday Birdwatch on the THIRD Sunday of each month now also meets at 8:30 am, at the same location. It is a day trip; please bring water and lunch.

Mombasa Birdwalks On the 3rd Saturday of each month. For meeting time and place, please contact Taibali Hamzali <thamzali@gmail.com> / 0733-980540; or Doris Schaule <dorischaule@gmail.com> / 0722-277752. Or check Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/FFJmombasa/>

Contact the office for information on other birdwalks in Kakamega, Kisumu, and other sites

Ngong Forest walks - 1st and 3rd Saturday at 9.00 am. Contact Simon 0729-840715

Download free QR Readers from the web and scan this QR (Quick Response) code with your smart phone for pictures and more stories.

Join us at Swara Acacia Lodge for the Big Birding Weekend on October 26th, 2019

A weekend of Birding, migration study, bird ringing and lectures by Fleur Ng'weno and team!

Cost: Ksh 9,800 per person sharing, Ksh 14,800 Single. All meals will be provided.

Swara Acacia is on Mombasa Road just past Athi River, visit **http://www.swaraacacia.com/**

For more details/booking call **+254717062855** or email **info@swaraacacia.com**

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For details on associated groups such as Youth Committee, Succulenta, and Friends of Nairobi Arboretum, City Park or Arabuko-Sokoke Forest, contact office@naturekenya.org